

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 01633 071218Z

51

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1633

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: CALL ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: PRAGUE 1543

SUMMARY. ON JULY 4 THE AMBASSADOR CALLED ON DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER RUZEK TO DISCUSS TWO MATTERS WHICH HAD BEEN HINDERING EMBASSY OPERATIONS, (A) INTERFERENCE WITH FREE ACCESS TO THE CHANCERY AND (B) PRESSURE ON HIRING AND FIRING OF LOCAL EMPLOYEES. DURING THE CONVERSATIONS, RUZEK BROUGHT UP THE POSSIBILITY OF A VISIT BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN, AND EMPHASIZED HOW DESIRABLE IT WOULD BE TO OPEN SUCH A DIALOGUE EITHER IN PRAGUE OR WASHINGTON. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR ACCOMPANIED BY DCM CALLED ON RUZEK JULY 4 TO DISCUSS TWO PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVING INCREASING CONCERN. SITUATION RE CZECH EMPLOYEES HAS WORSENERED, WITH GOC INSISTING THAT EMBASSY DISCHARGE SEVERAL VALUED EMPLOYEES WHILE OBSTRUCTING OUR HIRING OF NEEDED NEW EMPLOYEES. AS FOR ACCESS, WE HAVE BEEN AWARE OF A GENERALLY TIGHTER SITUATION SINCE ABOUT THE TIME OF HUSAK'S ANTI-DUBCEK SPEECH IN APRIL; IN RECENT WEEKS THERE HAVE BEEN MORE CHECKS AND SEARCHES OF PERSONS LEAVING OUR CHANCERY. ON JUNE 25 AN AGED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRAGUE 01633 071218Z

INVALID WAS STOPPED OUTSIDE EMBASSY BY POLICE AND

FILM HE BORROWED FROM OUR LIBRARY CONFISCATED.
(WE KNOW SPECIFICALLY OF TWO OTHER CONFISCATION
CASES AT THE SAME TIME, AND OF HEIGHTENED CHECKS OF
EXITEES INCLUDING AN AMERICAN EXCHANGE SCHOLAR.)
EMBASSY PROTESTED CONFISCATION OF FILM: SEE REFTEL.

2. APPRISED OF THIS SITUATION, THE AMBASSADOR
BROUGHT THE MATTER UP WITH HIS CZECH COUNTERPART
AT CSCE IN GENEVA, CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER AMBASSADOR
OLDVICH PAVLOUSKY, ON JUNE 27. PAVLOVSKY SAID HE
WOULD TELEPHONE FONMIN CHNOUPEK STRAIGHTWAY AND GET
THE SITUATION LOOKED INTO. HE MAY HAVE DONE SO TO
SOME EFFECT, BECAUSE THE POLICE SEEM TO HAVE RELAXED
SOMEWHAT IN RECENT DAYS.

3. IN BRINGING THIS UP WITH RUZEN, THEREFORE, THE
AMBASSADOR SPOKE CALMLY, BUT HE DID EMPHASIZE THAT
ACTIONS LIKE THESE WERE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH WHAT
WE WERE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH AT CSCE, AND WERE IN
FACT REMINISCENT OF THE EARLY FIFTIES.

4. RUZEK SAID HE WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH THE SPECIFIC
SITUATIONS, BUT WOULD LOOK INTO THEM TO SEE IF
SOMETHING COULD BE DONE. HE EMPHASIZED REPEATEDLY
THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN CZECHOSLOVAK POLICY, AND
THESE INCIDENTS DEFINITELY SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO
MEAN ANY POLICY CHANGE.

5. THIS LED RUZEK TO BRING UP THE NEED TO KEEP
LOOKING FOR MATTERS TO DISCUSS, FOR AREAS WHERE
CONSULTATION MIGHT BE USEFUL, DESPITE THE LONG-GRAVEL
ROADBLOCK, WHICH IT MIGHT TAKE SOME TIME TO GET
AROUND. RUZEK SAID HE CONSIDERED IT ESPECIALLY
IMPORTANT FOR THE US AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA TO GET REGULAR
MFA-STATE DEPT CONSULTATIONS GOING, FOR GOC NOW
HAD THESE WITH MOST IMPORTANT WESTERN COUNTRIES.
IN THIS CONNECTION, IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE
IF HARTMAN'S ACCEPTANCE OF THE GOC INVITATION WOULD
BE POSSIBLE. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE AGREED WITH THE
IDEA OF CONSULTATIONS, AND PERSONALLY HOPED VERY
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 01633 071218Z

MUCH THAT HARTMAN WOULD BE ABLE TO WORK A VISIT TO
PRAGUE INTO HIS VERY CROWDED SCHEDULE, BUT HE MADE
NO PROMISES. RUZEK SAID THAT IT DID NOT MATTER TOO
MUCH IF THE TALKS TOOK PLACE IN PRAGUE OR WASHINGTON,
JUST SO THE LONG-GRAVEL ROADBLOCK DID NOT FREEZE EVERY-
THING AND KEEP US FROM GETTING CONSULTATIONS STARTED.
(SINCE HE HAD BEEN TALKING ABOUT HIS OWN RECENT CON-
SULTATIONS IN OTTAWA, THIS SOUNDED LIKE A HINT THAT

IF HARTMAN WAS TOO BUSY TO TRAVEL, RUZEK MIGHT NOT BE.)

6. AT THE FOURTH OF JULY RECEPTION LATER THAT DAY, RUZEK (WHO WAS THE RANKING MFA GUEST IN A CROWD SOMEWHAT THINNER THAT LAST YEAR'S, ESPECIALLY AT THE TOP) SPOKE TO SEVERAL EMBOFFS ON THIS SAME THEME, THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING CONSULTATIONS STARTED (DESPITE LONG-GRAVEL) AND IN PARTICULAR THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HARTMAN VISIT.
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